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# common ground

FREE MAGAZINE

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5 Laws of Stupidity

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# Bitumen: the dangerous give-away

by Steve Bramwell

**B**ig Oil's mantra that "we have to get our oil to market" is untrue. The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), effectively a ministry of propaganda for Big Foreign Oil in Canada, spends millions to convince you that what is good for Big Oil is good for Canada. This is why the mainstream media has spewed misinformation about the Canadian oil and gas industry. The corporate media is not about to lose this income by telling you the truth.

When foreign oil companies in Alberta bid for a tar sands lease, the winning bidder pays the bid price plus a yearly lease fee of \$3.50 per hectare for a 15 year term, which can be extended. Once the money is paid, the oil companies are allowed to extract as much product as possible, at no cost other than the cost of extraction. Once extracted, the product is no longer owned by the Alberta government.

It is owned by the oil companies that extract it. The "we" is foreign oil companies. It is their oil and they want to get it to their market: the USA.

Norway nationalized its resources and gets so much value from its oil that they have a royalty fund worth over a trillion dollars. The Alberta royalty fund is close to bankrupt in comparison. Saudi Arabia builds beautiful cities and infrastructure with its oil wealth. In Canada we give away our resources in return for a few highly taxed jobs.

Huge wealth has come out of the tar sand area. What have Canadians received for it? Where are our free universities and fully funded hospitals? Where are the brand new highways and bridges? No, we have unemployment, homeless camps and food banks; we even have food banks at universities. Do they have them in Saudi Arabia?

Exporting our raw resources seems to be the only

option our myopic governments want to entertain.

This is the deal that is being so vigorously promoted by Big Oil and the Federal government. Trudeau and his crew are spending up to \$14 billion of your dollars for a pipeline that will enable the give-away of our resources and the offshoring of our jobs.

Alberta has the lowest royalty rates in North America, and while Alberta is almost bankrupt from 40 years of Conservative government, nobody is talking about raising the royalty rates. Why?

Why would foreign oil companies build upgraders and refineries in Alberta – and pay Canadian labour, higher royalties and taxes on profit – when they can avoid all this by pipelining the raw product out of the country? Not only are we allowing this, we are building them a pipeline to do it. This is beyond stupid when one considers the fact that Canada imports huge amounts of crude.

For 70 years we have been importing Saudi crude for use in the eastern refineries. In all that time none of the governments in place have seen fit to change that. Why? Is it because those governments are owned and operated by the big foreign oil companies that make huge profits extracting resources from Canada?

## Dangerous goods

When the sand is removed from the tar sand in Fort McMurray, what is left is a tarlike substance called bitumen. To transport it through a pipeline it is diluted with natural gas condensate. This product contains benzene, hexane, pentane, toluene and other dangerous chemicals. Gas condensate is very explosive and the vapours can kill. Diluted bitumen, or dilbit, is not like the conventional crude we have been transporting by pipeline.

The proposed 1100 km Trans Mountain (TMX) pipeline expansion from Edmonton to Burnaby would

add 12 pumping stations to the existing 23 for a total of approximately 100,000 horsepower of pumping capacity. The system would deliver 890,000 barrels per day through pipe with diameters up to 40 inches. The system would deliver dilbit at 98,000 litres per minute operating at a pressure of 900 pounds per square inch. A firehose operates at 130 psi and can reach 10 stories high. A breach in a 900 psi pipeline will spew explosive, toxic product hundreds of meters.

If the TMX storage tank farm is expanded it would hold up to five million barrels of dangerous dilbit. The facility is located in a heavily populated area 600 meters from Forest Grove Elementary School, and 1700 meters from Simon Fraser University which hosts up to 20,000 students/staff.

Five million barrels is 36 times the amount spilled from the Exxon Valdez, and 132 times the amount of crude oil product containing gas condensate that devastated Lac Megantic, Quebec.

The Burnaby Fire Dept has officially stated that an explosion, fire, or tank boil-over on Burnaby Mountain would be beyond their ability to contain. Trans Mountain has its own emergency response team that is located a safe distance away, in Kamloops. When Kinder Morgan owned the project, the response team was located in Texas.

An explosion, fire or toxic gas release at the Burnaby terminal has the potential to kill hundreds if not thousands of people. Why are we being asked to accept this risk just so foreign companies can make huge profits? Short answer is: we are not being asked, we are being told it is in the national interest. Another statement to add to the pile of lies. **K**

**Steve Bramwell** is a retired oil sands worker and a 50 year member of International Electrical Workers Union Local 424, Edmonton

# common ground

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## Know the truth

The governments of Alberta and Canada, are captured by the Empire of Oil. Industrial-scale deception seduces these politicians. The empire's goal is to extract resources and ship them around the world to refine where labour is cheap. Then sell the finished goods back to us at inflated prices.

The effects of climate change are ignored.

Binary concepts such as Left and Right, Christians vs Muslims, Capitalist vs Communist, Protestant vs Catholics, Chinese vs Indians...or, the Empire against anyone else who won't supplicate. These are linguistic social engineering tools. It's power-over. The divisions divide, control and direct the neo-Lower Class. 5G is their next big global project for power-over, to become the gatekeepers of the internet. Their platforms are the new plantations where we work while they harvest fresh data with our every key stroke.

It does not have to be this way. This edition of *Common Ground* is dedicated to peeling back the plans that keep us captive. We need to know the truth about the dangerous, economy destroying bitumen pipeline, or the health hazards of wireless 5G, or the devastation to wildlife from the proposed Roberts Bank Terminal 2. *Common Ground* has well researched articles in this edition to illuminate these major threats to life and happiness.

Dr. John Gofman who isolated the first gram of plutonium on Earth for the Manhattan Project, framed power politics clearly. Gofman called it The Screwers vs The Screwees. Either you call the shots to screw over people and the planet, or, you are part of the much larger group getting screwed. Through soulless corporations, elite teams of ignorant business aristocrats hide out in their corporate bubbles. But rich or poor, we all share the same planet. We are all human family. Lets learn what is motivating the events of our time. And look after our home, Mother Earth.

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# Better health safety guidelines imperative before exposing public to 5G

by Frank Clegg and Margaret Friesen

**H**ealth Canada's track record is poor with respect to timely responses to many agents that have proven harmful to Canadians. These include asbestos, bisphenol-A (BPA), cigarette smoking, dioxins, flame retardants, lead, mercury, thalidomide and urea formaldehyde insulation.

Highlighting just two examples, the link between workplace asbestos exposure and cancer was first discovered in the 1930s. Canadian Parliament passed the Prohibition of Asbestos and Products in 2018. The first scientific link of cigarette smoke and cancer was published in 1939. In May 2019, Health Canada announced an "important milestone" in Canada's tobacco control strategy (cigarettes in plain packages with graphic health warnings) by spring 2020.

Unless Health Canada updates its safety guidelines based on the best available science, we will be adding radiofrequency radiation emitted from wireless devices (e.g. cell phones and cell tower antennas) to this auspicious list. An update has become even more urgent because of the impending widespread rollout of 5G technologies across Canada.

This is a public health imperative with serious health consequences if not fully addressed.

## Facts you should know about Canada's inadequate wireless radiation safety standards

- Health Canada's Safety Code 6 sets guidelines for the safe human exposure to radiofrequency radiation in commonly used equipment (e.g. small and cell tower antennas) and devices (e.g. cell phones, tablets and baby monitors). Innovation Science and Economic Development (ISED) approves the use of wireless equipment and devices in Canada if they meet Safety Code 6 guidelines. Safety Code 6 has not undergone any major revisions since being established in 1979.

- Health Canada's Safety Code 6 guidelines are based on the assumption that tissue must be heated to be harmed. There is substantial peer-reviewed evidence that this assumption is not valid.

- During the last revision of Safety Code 6, Health Canada ignored the requests of over 100 international scientists and Canadian medical doctors to set more protective safety guidelines.

- Canadian and other scientists have clearly laid out the scientific evidence that radiofrequency radiation should be classified as a known human carcinogen (as are asbestos and cigarette smoking).



- China, Russia, and parts of Italy and Switzerland have guidelines that are 100 times safer than Canada's.

- Health Canada has never completed a proper review of the scientific evidence that meets international standards.

- Well over 200 peer-reviewed studies have been published since the last revision of Safety Code 6 (2015), showing that radiofrequency radiation is harmful to human health below Safety Code 6 limits. The studies show evidence of brain and colorectal cancer, impact on children (development, eye and brain cancer), DNA and sperm damage, and oxidative stress which can lead to cancer, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

- Some international scientists maintain that this type of radiation has been proven to be harmful to humans and the environment. Appeals for more protective standards from radiofrequency radiation have been made by 252 world-recognized scientists from 43 nations.

- Canadians are concerned and they need to be informed. The investigative program CBC's *Marketplace* "The Secret Inside Your Cell Phone", with over 2.8 million views, reports that 81 percent of Canadians have not seen the warning message in their phone or manual, 67 percent of Canadians say they carry their phones in their pocket or directly against their body, and some cell phone models emit radiation three to four times above Safety Code 6 limits when held against the body.

## Facts you should know about 5G technologies and health

- With full 5G roll out, industry forecasts millions of small cell antennas across Canada, resulting in cell antennas, functionally equivalent to "towers", as close as 50 meters to homes, offices and schools. Any "non-tower structure" such as a lamp post or hydro pole is a candidate to host one, and perhaps more, small cell antenna(s).

- The installation of these cell antennas does not require notification or public consultation.

- There has been no health safety testing on long term exposures to radiation from 5G technologies. Furthermore, we know that no such studies are being planned in the USA and we are not aware of any planned for Canada.

- Brussels (Belgium), parts of Italy and Switzerland have put a halt to the roll out of 5G until more is known about possible adverse effects.

- At a May 2019 symposium, hosted by the Environmental Health Clinic, Women's College Hospital in Toronto, Canadian scientists and physicians publicly stated that full 5G roll out will expose Canadians to an unprecedented increase in radiofrequency radiation from antennas and our personal devices themselves. They expressed concern that our health care costs will rise – without our medical professionals understanding why or having the necessary information for making accurate assessments.

## Wired is better than wireless

- Wireless networks are inferior to wired networks for a number of reasons: they continue to be about 100 times slower than wired systems; they are unreliable, and more prone to both latency and delay issues; they consume significant amounts of energy – more than wired – and are not sustainable; they increase the points of vulnerability; and they increase the security and privacy risks to personal and business data.

- Wireless networks are energy hogs. In a recent article, the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) states, "Wireless technologies will continue to consume at least 10 times more power than wired technologies when providing comparable access rates and traffic volumes."

*continued p.15...*





# Captive bred wildlife also need habitat

**B**ritish Columbia is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on a captive breeding program to protect spotted owls. With an estimated six of the owls left in the wild in Canada, all in B.C., that seems like good news. But while the program includes some habitat protection, the province is also approving logging in habitat the owl needs to survive.

It's a major flaw in government-led conservation efforts. Stories of captive breeding programs that lead to successful animal re-introduction are happy, but they're often born out of sad stories about the animals' plight.

Captive breeding programs are last-ditch efforts to save animals after humans have degraded or destroyed their habitat to the point where it's difficult for them to survive. In almost every case, experts and regulators are aware of the species' decline and the reasons behind it, but calls for habitat conservation go unheeded, or efforts to ensure the animals can continue are inadequate.

Species don't disappear overnight. Activities that degrade and destroy habitat are allowed to continue until a species is driven to point where it can no longer function in the wild and needs human help.

Conservation would work better if land-use management regimes focused on maintaining the habitat wildlife requires before it's too late. Instead, we wait until tipping points have been passed and then scramble to capture animals for breeding.

Captive breeding itself is often controversial, riddled with risks. When humans handle wildlife over generations, animals can become semi-domesticated and lose intergenerational knowledge about survival in nature. Once they're re-introduced into the wild, many don't make it.

According to recent research, the odds of captured predators – such as tigers and wolves – surviving freedom are only 33 per cent, and studies show captive-bred animals are more likely to interact and mate with other captive-bred animals and lose their ability to communicate with wild peers. Another study concluded captive-bred animals may develop behavioural changes such as “decrease in predator avoidance, decrease in foraging abilities, increase in sleeping patterns, decrease in overall activity, and some problems in social behaviors.”

**The main issue is the risk of releasing captive-bred wildlife into degraded habitat that couldn't support it in the first place.**

The intergenerational effects are biological as well as cultural. One study showed captive breeding can result in genetic changes between captive and wild lineages, and confinement can make animals more susceptible to disease outbreaks. (A tragic lion-breeding program resulted in the deaths of nearly two dozen “struck by a mysterious disease aggravated by inbreeding and a weakened gene pool.”)

The main issue is the risk of releasing captive-bred wildlife into degraded habitat that couldn't support it in the first place. Most examples of successful endangered species recovery involve animals facing threats other than habitat loss. Eagles were declining because of DDT contamination until it was banned. Condors were being poisoned by lead in the bodies of the carrion they ate until lead shot was limited.

Some programs pair captive breeding with habitat res-

toration, such as one run by the Burrowing Owl Conservation Society of B.C., which takes an active approach to protecting and enhancing burrowing owl habitat through stewardship programs with landowners and First Nations. The burrowing owl is listed as endangered by the federal government, which says populations in Canada declined by 90 per cent from 1990 to 2000 and a further 643 per cent between 2005 and 2015. The grasslands it and many other species depend on have been all but wiped out by agriculture and development.

As with the spotted owl case and others, most captive breeding programs omit or fail to adequately address the crucial habitat part of the recovery equation. Boreal woodland caribou are being penned in Alberta and British Columbia while status quo oil and gas and logging operations continue to fragment their forest habitat. The provinces are also killing predators such as wolves, and competitors such as barred owls, as part of recovery initiatives for caribou and spotted owls – a stopgap solution.

Unless captive breeding programs are combined with meaningful habitat protection and restoration initiatives, efforts will be more about show than success.

For the sake of animals taken from the wild, and for staff and volunteers who spend countless hours nurturing wildlife from birth to releasable ages, we must demand that governments work to repair destroyed and fragmented habitat driving many species to the brink. ◀

**David Suzuki** is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Ontario Science Projects Manager Rachel Plotkin. Learn more at [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org).

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Universe Within Gwen Randall-Young

PSYCHOLOGY

# Never stop learning

*One of the secrets of life is to keep our intellectual curiosity acute.*  
– William Lyon Phelps

**L**earning has expanded. It has exploded beyond the walls of traditional school buildings. Alternative programs abound, and with computers giving access to constantly updated information, textbooks can be hopelessly obsolete.

Now more than ever, it is possible to explore whatever intrigues us. Like a child following a path through the woods, and stopping to absorb the wonders along the way, we can freely choose our own learning path.

It would seem that we've been sidetracked by an educational system that directed our learning. For so long, adults in far away offices arbitrarily decided what should fill our minds. Teachers so often ignored our natural curiosity and spontaneous intellectual cravings in the interests of meeting curriculum goals.

However, it was not *our* curriculum. Natural learning was ignored, even discouraged, in favor of structured education.

In order to have such education administered effectively, it was necessary to remove us from our natural habitat. Often we were placed in sterile rooms where even fresh air and natural light were limited.

We were prisoners in the sense that we were not free to come and go at will. We had to sit at a hard desk, even if the body responded to the lack of movement with restlessness and fatigue.

We were not even free to spontaneously make natural human sounds. In many cases, the end result was a deterioration in the natural desire to learn.


Things are different now. Perhaps not so much in many schools, but certainly different for students in alternative programs, and different for adults. As adults, we are now free to reawaken that natural human desire to explore our environments: inner space, outer space, and all the spaces in between.

No more walls, no more limitations, no rules, no teacher. Only the light, the boundless, the timeless, the eternal.

Young children learn by following what interests them. They may change direction many times in a few minutes, or may become engrossed in an activity for hours. The learning process unfolds naturally, and is fueled by curiosity and guided by what the child loves. Creative and intellectual geniuses develop their abilities by also focusing on what interests them and immersing themselves in what they love. Knowledge and experience grow synergistically.

It is profoundly nurturing to the human spirit to pursue what naturally attracts us. Not only is it nurturing, it is the way that we evolve. Too often, pursuing what we love is considered a luxury, a leisure time activity. But for optimal wellness, for true alignment of body, mind and soul, we must allow our heart, our joy, to be our compass.

When we are deep into activities or learning experiences that we are passionate about, we transcend time and space. It is here that we have the experience of soulfulness. It is here that we allow the creative energy of the universe to pulse freely through us.

We merge into the co-creative dance that is eons old and ever new. We are life. Fortunately, now, there are more avenues and opportunities for learning than ever before. There are so many ways of learning about our world, learning about ourselves. The Universe is our classroom. 

**Gwen Randall-Young** is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. To read more articles, order books or listen to audio recordings, visit [www.gwen.ca](http://www.gwen.ca), or follow her on Facebook.

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# Government interference in mega Terminal 2



## Ethics Commissioner should investigate environmental assessment interference in Fraser Estuary project

of including this evidence in their report.

The Port of Vancouver is a government corporation under the responsibility of Transport Canada. In conflict of interest, the Deputy Minister of Transport has been in direct contact with the Review Panel which is supposed to operate independently of government. Similarly, the Review Panel has been corresponding with the Deputy Ministers of Environment, Fisheries and Oceans, and Health.




**At the public hearings, and in reports, the port actively discredited and disparaged Environment Canada scientists in a rarely seen criticism of one government agency by another.**

Reports from federal Government scientists should have been submitted directly to the Independent Review Panel. Instead, the reports have been orchestrated, altered and withheld at the Deputy Minister level before they ever reach the Review Panel. Closing comments from Environment Canada scientists, sent to Ottawa, were never submitted to the Review Panel. Apparently Transport Canada ordered that none of the federal agencies were permitted to submit closing comments in spite of the Review Panel's request for closing comments.

The B.C. Government is also in conflict of interest in the B.C. Assessment, as it made a legal requirement to include information from the Gateway Transportation Collaboration Forum, a narrowly focused group of vested interests that has received millions in tax dollars.

The B.C. Government also improperly transferred BC estuarine wetlands to the federal government to facilitate RBT2 even though the Project has not yet been approved.

All of the above confirms the public's perception that the "fix was in". 

For further information, visit the websites of 'Against Port Expansion in the Fraser River Estuary' and 'Action in Time' or email: [info@againstportexpansion.org](mailto:info@againstportexpansion.org)

**T**he Boundary Bay Conservation Committee (BBCC) has sent a letter to the Canadian Ethics Commissioner, Prime Minister Trudeau, and Premier John Horgan requesting termination of the environmental assessment of the Roberts Bank Container Terminal 2 Project (RBT2). BBCC exposed political interference that muzzled reports submitted by Government scientists.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) placed unreasonable limitations on the scope of the assessment and denied meaningful public participation through restrictive measures and an interpretation of the law that is not supported in the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*.

The Harper Conservative Government gutted environmental protection under the Omnibus Bill of 2012. It is patently unacceptable that the current Canadian Liberal Government now continues environmental assessment under that outdated, ambiguous, weak 2012 CEAA legislation.

The Canadian government allowed the proponent, the Port of Vancouver, to constrain the Terms of Reference. Impacts beyond the Project footprint such as air pollution are not included in the environmental assessment. A 2019 'Near-Road Air Pollution Pilot Study Final Report', states that near-road emissions from highly polluting diesel trucks dramatically increase concentrations of toxic air pollutants.

The B.C. Government, also assessing the Project, has not stepped up to protect Greater Vancouver residents who will be significantly impacted by congestion, and air pollution from larger vessels, trains, plus double the number of container trucks.

The Port of Vancouver paid scientists for reports that were not peer reviewed. At the public hearings, and in reports, the port actively discredited and disparaged Environment Canada scientists in a rarely seen criticism of one government agency by another. The rebuttals from

Environment Canada in closing comments were muzzled in Ottawa and were never sent to the Review Panel that was appointed to oversee the environmental assessment and report to the Minister of Environment.

It is now the end of 2019, *six years after the initiation of the environmental assessment*, and yet the federal Liberals and the BC Government support the flawed process for a massive, man-made island in the Fraser River Estuary for Terminal 2. This precious delta has global significance for salmon, resident Killer Whales and migratory birds. This is Canada's top Important Bird Area (IBA), a Ramsar Site, a Wildlife Management Area and the highest designation site under the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network. Their misguided plan is to dredge 460 acres in the estuary and build the island with fill that is toxic.

BBCC was not permitted to address the ambiguity in the CEAA 2012 legislation at the public hearing of the Roberts Bank Terminal 2 Project. The Review Panel chose to operate under an interpretation of *CEAA 2012* that is not supported in the Act, the Terms of Reference or the Mandate of the Review Panel. Three years after their appointment, and six years after the beginning of the environmental assessment in 2013, the Review Panel publicly announced an unsupported interpretation of the law:

"...According to CEAA 2012 the Panel is required to look at the purpose of the project but not the need for the project. Its mandate is to examine a specific container terminal proposed by a proponent and evaluate its environmental effects and not where the B.C. West Coast requires the development of a container terminal."

This illegal restrictive proclamation makes no sense to the public who participated in the process and wrote submissions with evidence that there is no business case for Roberts Bank Terminal 2. They also showed how other locations in British Columbia are more suited to port expansion for containers. The proclamation means the Review Panel has no intention



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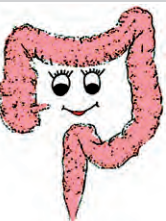
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HEALTH

## Plant diet can reverse chronic disease

**P**eople burdened with a chronic illness may think their condition will be a lifelong companion. Yet science is giving strong indications that simple lifestyle changes can rid us of rheumatoid arthritis, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and can decrease risk and recurrence of certain cancers.

While it is of course important to follow medical advice, simply changing what's on our plate, and perhaps adopting a suitable fitness regime, can lead to the most remarkable changes! I recently interviewed Agathe Mathieu, of the delightful Café by Tao in North Vancouver. Here is what she told me.

"Back in fall 2003, I had rheumatoid arthritis, floaters in my vision, skin rashes, plus excess weight. I never thought that changing my diet, which I then believed to be healthy, would change my life. My mother had arthritis, and I believed that I was doomed to follow in her pain-filled footsteps. I learned of the Scandinavian research in which the majority of those with arthritis were able to reverse their symptoms on plant-based diets. Well, within 3 months of switching my family to organic plant food, all of my ailments

vanished. Imagine that! I was able to sew again; to lift heavy boxes; to simply close my hands. The swelling was gone; the pain was gone. I was able to read a book without fighting to see the words. My children's rashes, hyperactivity, and even temper tantrums, vanished too. That was a life changing experience. Physical and emotional challenges were resolved. What more could I wish for?

"Around us was another amazing, heart-warming change. Our garbage, from a family of five, went down from two big garbage bags to one small kitchen bag. Our grocery shopping took half the time; with a variety of produce and seasonings, we were out of the market. It was beyond beautiful to see our footprint shrink by the minute, giving our mother earth a chance to also get healthy again, and a future for my children.

"One might say 'but I could never do that'. What if you could? What if you would give it a try for just one to three months, and experience the vital change flowing in you? What if you had energy like there is no tomorrow? What if your children would shine with health. I mean, as if you were never sick. What is a month, really, if it gives you back the

life you want?"

Agathe now runs the Tao restaurant and store at 210-150 Esplanade West (on the upper concourse), in North Vancouver. It offers the sort of delicious fare that helped her regain her health ([www.taoorganics.com](http://www.taoorganics.com)).

In the 1990s, I had the privilege of being a staff dietitian for retreats held by Dr. Dean Ornish, in Berkeley California. His research definitively proved that heart disease can be reversed simply with dietary and lifestyle changes. Dr. Ornish has continued his effective research on men with prostate cancer.

For anyone with type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease, or for those who simply want to lose a few pounds, an excellent resource is *The Kick Diabetes Cookbook*. This book features delicious plant-based recipes (without added sugar or oils) that can help with all of these conditions. [K](#)

**Vesanto Melina** is a registered dietitian and co-author of award winning books that are classics in plant-based nutrition. Visit [nutrispeak.com](http://nutrispeak.com) and [becomingvegan.ca](http://becomingvegan.ca)



# Let's all be less stupid. OK?

that is the 21st Century.

Here's a start: the "Golden Law of Stupidity". This shall define a stupid person as one who causes problems for others without any clear benefit to themselves. Simple.

Also politically correct. This definition has nothing to do with gender, race, or nationality. There are stupid Presidents, Prime Ministers, Premiers, MPs and MLAs. They're among those who gather at Davos, the United Nations, and your local mall. On Facebook, Twitter and TV. There are stupid people in every nation and neighbourhood, and they are humanity's greatest existential threat.

That was the warning and conclusion offered by Professor Carlo M. Cipolla, an economic historian at the University of California, Berkeley, in a 1976 essay, *The Basic Laws of Human Stupidity*. The Italian-born Cipolla was no dummy; he studied at the Sorbonne and London School of Economics, taught and researched internationally, and formulated the first economic model of stupidity.

He divided those of us who must co-exist with stupidity into three groups. First: intelligent people whose actions are reciprocal and benefit both themselves and others. Second: bandits who benefit themselves at others' expense. Lastly: the helpless who contribute to society and whose actions enrich others at their own expense, but who are taken advantage of (especially by bandits).

The non-stupid are a flawed and inconsistent bunch. Sometimes acting intelligently, sometimes selfishly or helplessly. We are a mixed bag.

Bandits, such as sociopaths, psychopaths, the all-too-familiar non-pathological "jerks" and amoralists, pursue their self-interest to the detriment of the common good. They act with full knowledge of the negative consequences of their actions on society, but neither identify with, nor care about those consequences. For example, our so-called "global elites", who inflict losses upon others while reaping benefits for themselves and the GNP of our endangered world. Stupid people drag down and impoverish society as a whole.

As a result, Cipolla argued, a stupid person is the worst, explaining:

"Essentially stupid people are dangerous and damaging because reasonable people find it difficult to imagine and understand unreasonable behaviour. An intelligent person may understand a bandit's logic. Their actions follow a pattern of rationality: nasty rationality, if you like, but still rationality.

"The bandit wants a plus on his account, but isn't intelligent enough to obtain it without causing a minus to appear on others. All this is bad, but it is rational and predictable. You can foresee a bandit's actions, his nasty manoeuvres and ugly aspirations, and often can build up your defences," he added.

However, the non-stupid constantly underestimate the damaging power of stupid individuals. This problem

is compounded by assumptions that certain people are intelligent because of superficial factors such as job, education, and celebrity. They aren't. Social status does not preclude stupidity.

Forgetting this is costly and we do so at our peril.

Cipolla insists we can do nothing about the stupid. They are abundant, irrational, and subvert society's overall well-being. A society can avoid being crushed only if the non-stupid work even harder to offset the losses.

The difference between societies that collapse under the weight of their stupid citizens, and those that transcend them, is the relative number of the non-stupid. A high proportion of people acting intelligently brings benefit for them and for their fellow citizens.

Declining societies have the same percentage of stupid people as successful ones. But they also have a high percentage of helpless people and, Cipolla writes, "an alarming proliferation of the bandits with overtones of stupidity.

"Such change in the composition of the non-stupid population inevitably strengthens the destructive power of the stupid fraction and makes decline a certainty," Cipolla concludes, "and the country goes to Hell."

The question now is whether our short-term survival and future will be peaceful, equitable and deliberate, or an ugly haphazard collapse into states of fractured barbarity. It is time for intelligent people to redouble efforts to offset the losses incurred by the stupid, and demand accountability for common good. To do anything else would be, in a word, stupid. ◀

## The five fundamental laws of stupidity

1. Always and inevitably everyone underestimates the number of stupid individuals in circulation.
2. The probability that a certain person (will) be stupid is independent of any other characteristic of that person.
3. A stupid person is a person who causes losses to another person or to a group of persons while himself deriving no gain, and even possibly incurring losses.
4. Non-stupid people always underestimate the damaging power of stupid individuals. In particular non-stupid people constantly forget that, at all times and places and under any circumstances, to deal with or associate with stupid people always turns out to be a costly mistake.
5. A stupid person is the most dangerous type of person.

by Bruce Mason

If anyone survives the current human-caused mass extinction – the sixth since the dawn of time – they'll look back on our epoch as the Golden Age of Stupidity. There is no better way, or word, to describe a species that is greedily stretching the resources of planet Earth beyond what it can sustainably provide, while wilfully destroying life upon it.

Since *stupidity* defines us, let's define it. Or re-define it. So often, we use the word despairingly when facing the ubiquity of stupidity, baffling political realities, obscene inequity, perpetual war and ecocide. So let's come to a common and wise understanding of its meaning in order to comprehend and reverse the feces-storm



# 5G mobile telephony: a primer

by Carl Katz

**5**G mobile telephony is without a doubt the most hyped mobile phone technology since its inception in the 1980s. As a result, public awareness of 5G is rife with misconceptions. The wireless industry is touting 5G mobile technology as “the best thing since sliced bread”. 5G will allow the deployment of driverless cars and the Internet of Things. This involves embedding wireless transmitters and computer systems in fridges, appliances and light bulbs (just to name a few) in order to control and monitor the devices.

## The Confusion over 5G mobile telephony vs. 5G Wi-Fi

Important fact: 5G mobile telephony is a completely different thing than the 5G Wi-Fi in your home's internet router. The “5G” in 5G Wi-Fi refers to wireless frequencies which are in the 5 gigahertz range. The “5G” in 5G mobile telephony refers to the 5th generation of what we called “cell phone” technology when it was introduced in the 1980s. Note that the current mobile telephony standards are 3G and 4G/LTE (Long Term Evolution). Confusion about the two 5G specifications has caused anxiety and even hysteria in many people who don't understand the difference.

5G mobile telephony (which I will abbreviate as 5GMT for the purposes

of this article) uses millimeter waves – 4 to 14 mm compared to the current 3G and 4G/LTE mobile telephony standard wavelengths which average around 15 centimeters depending on the frequency. 5GMT millimeter waveforms are by nature, highly unstable and will require much higher power levels to make 5GMT work, resulting in an exponential increase in the number of transmitters – as many as one transmitter every three to five houses in residential neighbourhoods.

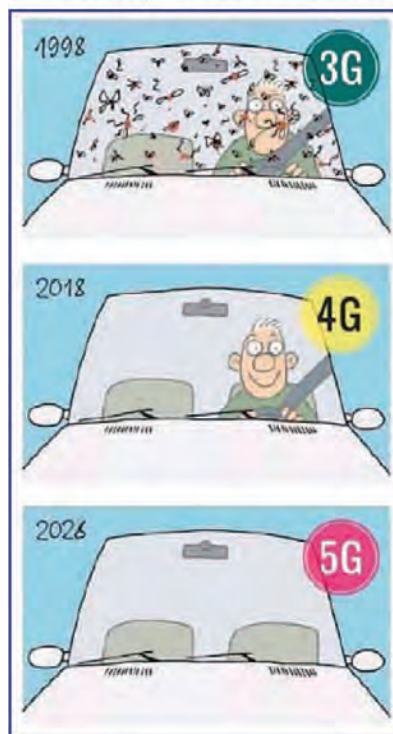
It's important to mention at this point that all generations of mobile telephony – starting in the 1980s and every subsequent generation – were never pre-tested for safety, and had no monitoring for health effects after they were put on the market (commonly referred to as “post market surveillance”). This applies to 5G mobile telephony as well, and includes both the mobile telephony infrastructure we see on our streets (transmitters and towers) and mobile phones. It also applies to Wi-Fi, baby monitors and cordless home phones. If all these were tested with the same rigor applied to pre-market testing of pharmaceuticals, they would have never made it to market.

## Health effects

Here is an abbreviated list of some of the symptoms of exposure to wireless radiation: heart arrhythmias,

insomnia and sleep disturbances, tinnitus, fatigue, mood swings, unexplained rashes, unexplained anxiety and depression, nausea and dizziness.

## Insect populations declining



## 5G and the military

5GMT uses the same frequencies (albeit at lower power) that are used by military forces around the world for a different application called “active denial” technology. Active denial technology is used for military applications and crowd control by aiming a powerful transmitter at a person or

group of people. The beam causes intense heating just below the skin.

## 5G from space

As previously mentioned, 5G millimeter wave forms are highly unstable compared to existing 3G and 4G mobile telephony where the wavelengths measure approximately 15 cm to 45 cm. As a result, the unstable 5G millimeter waves are very susceptible to atmospheric conditions such as clouds, rain and snow, as well as trees and building structures. It is therefore theoretically impossible to transmit these millimetre waves from space, let alone distances more than 500 meters (as tested in ideal conditions). The best guess at this point is that point-to-point laser technology will transmit signals from land to satellites and back.

## The economics

Based on the cost of past wireless industry build-outs, there is solid evidence that the total cost of the equipment and sheer number of antennae will make it economically unfeasible to cover densely populated cities and areas, let alone rural and remote areas. The cost of the infrastructure build-out will far exceed any revenues generated by the sale of devices and phone/data plans. [◀](#)

**Carl Katz** is a former director of Citizens for Safe Technology, a technical advisor to Canadians for Safe Technology (C4ST) and a senior IT consultant.

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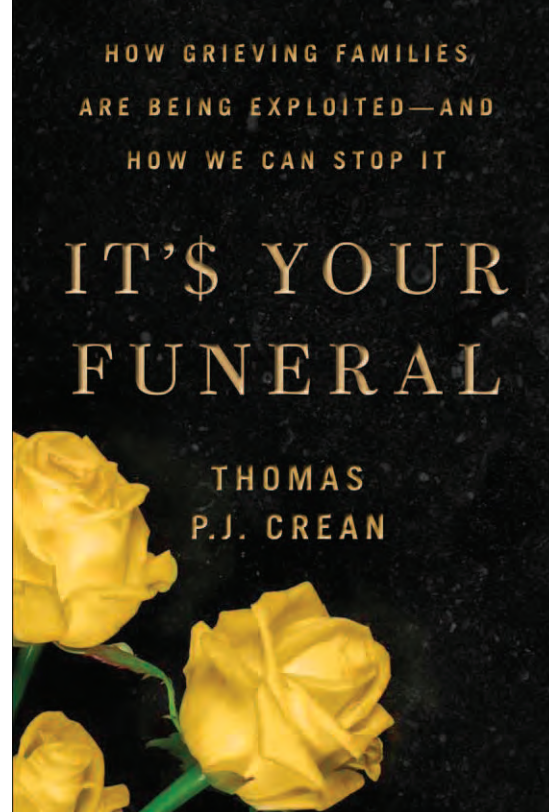
# Books

**T**homas P. J. Crean certainly has an end-of-life story to tell. In November 2019, he published *It's Your Funeral: How Grieving Families Are Being Exploited, and How We Can Stop It*. It is a timely piece of nonfiction intended to educate people about the funeral business.

Crean is the grandson of Thomas James Kearney, who founded Kearney Funeral Services in Vancouver, in 1908. Crean became president of the company seventy years later. At the time, in the late 1970s, funeral-and-cemetery service was loosely regulated in BC, and the two largest North American funeral conglomerates were buying out nearly all the family-owned funeral homes. Profitability was their sole objective, and the exploitation of grieving families became part of the playbook.

Crean, disturbed by the conglomerates' tactics, became involved in consumer advocacy and public education. He has testified before funeral industry regulators in Ottawa, New York, and Washington, DC. He has also addressed numerous funeral associations and sustainable-business groups, including the American Sustainable Business Council and the American Independent Business Alliance.

By 1996, the chains were handling more than 80 percent of funeral arrangements in Greater Vancouver. That year, Crean led a successful movement to save the management of Mountain View Cemetery, Vancouver's only cemetery, from privatization. He then organized 4,000 independent funeral firms to prevent Service Corporation International – in Canada and the US – from trademarking the phrase “family funeral care.”



Book may be ordered at: [ItsYourFuneral.ca](http://ItsYourFuneral.ca)

In 2004, Crean joined the Surrey Hospice Society Board. Working with the dying and their caregivers helped him further understand the ways in which the corporate funeral chains manipulated people when at their most vulnerable, especially by garnering all the influence possible with the “end-of-life” caregiver community.

In April of 2012 the BC Funeral Service Association celebrated its

have the safest standards. Contact your Member of Parliament and ask what they can do to ensure Health Canada updates Safety Code 6. Until that happens, MPs should also be asked to implement a moratorium on any further 5G roll out. **K**

Frank Clegg is a former president of Microsoft Canada and founding CEO of Canadians for Safe Technology (C4ST), a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan, volunteer-based coalition of parents, citizens and experts. Frank also co-chairs the Business Advisory Group of the US based Environmental Health Trust. **Margaret Friesen** is a retired

federal government research biologist and science advisor of Canadians for Safe Technology. To find out how to become a C4ST Riding Representative, email [Wendyc@c4st.org](mailto:Wendyc@c4st.org). For more information visit: [www.ehtrust.org](http://www.ehtrust.org)  
Canadians For Safe Technology [www.c4st.org/](http://www.c4st.org/)  
Electromagnetic Radiation Safety [www.saferemr.com](http://www.saferemr.com)  
Stoppons la 5G [www.stopponsla5g.ca](http://www.stopponsla5g.ca) (English version available soon)  
Canadians Concerned about Wireless 5G [www.ccw5g.org](http://www.ccw5g.org)

100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Kearney-Crean family was honored as being the only founding member still in business. A few years later, Crean left the family business to devote himself to fighting the predatory and monopolistic practices of the funeral conglomerates.

Crean has served on the boards of many civic and professional organizations. A past-president of the Rotary Club of Vancouver, he is now president of the Surrey Hospice Society board and the Family Funeral Home

Association. He also serves on the boards of the Partners In Care Alliance Society and Cooperative, the BC Association for Media Education, the Family Association for Media Education, and the Canadian Institute for Information and Privacy Studies.

In 2016, Crean acquired land in South Surrey, BC, rezoning it into the first new cemetery in BC's Lower Mainland in 50 years. In 2018, along with family members and other investors, he opened Heritage Gardens Cemetery. It offers compassionate guidance and sustainable, reasonably priced alternatives to traditional burial and cremation. **K**

...5G from pg. 5

## Canadian safety Code 6 should be updated based on the best science

• Canadians should have the safest guidelines based on the best science available. The gold standard for such an approach is to have a systematic review of the literature conducted according to international best practices. This must be done by scientists independent of industry and in a transparent manner with the opportunity to have input from the public.

We have an excellent opportunity to appeal to our MPs recently elected to Canada's 43rd Parliament to ensure we

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- Marjolene, Whitehorse, Yukon

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Many thanks for the wonderful publication. Best wishes.

- Janet & Paul G., Victoria

You do good work, so here's some help, Joseph!

- Jill A.W., Salt Spring Island

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*Joseph Roberts  
Common Ground  
Publisher & founder (est.1982)*